

SEQUESTRATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Arizona (Mrs. KIRKPATRICK) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. KIRKPATRICK. Madam Speaker, the voters sent us to Congress because they want solutions, but reckless, across-the-board cuts are not solutions. We are just 2 days away from the start of these cuts known as sequestration, 2 days away from hurting, rather than helping, the people who elected us.

Let me share with you some examples.

I represent Arizona's District One. This is a vast, beautiful, mostly rural district. It's larger than the State of Pennsylvania. My district includes one of the greatest natural resources of the world, the Grand Canyon, and many other national parks. The Grand Canyon is not only an environmental treasure; it is an economic driver. It brings \$700 million to our economy and creates 12,000 jobs annually.

If our national parks are forced to cut operating hours, cut services or even close facilities, we will be hurting the economy, not helping it. Thousands of jobs and small businesses are connected to the national parks in my district and across our Nation. Hurting our national parks is not a solution.

I'm also concerned about how sequestration will hurt education. Thousands of low-income students in Arizona would no longer receive aid to help cover the cost of college. Work study jobs would be eliminated, and Arizona is the largest recipient of impact aid funding in the Nation. Impact aid compensates local school districts for revenue they lost due to the presence of federally owned and, therefore, tax-exempt property.

□ 1050

It compensates local school districts for costs incurred due to federally connected students.

What are federally connected students?

These are students who are Native American, who have a parent in the military, or who live on Federal property.

In my district in 2012, for example, the Chinle Unified School District received more than \$22 million in impact aid. Sequestration cuts would deeply affect a district like Chinle's. It would hurt its capacity for everything from transportation to staffing and from construction to classroom size. Hurting our schools and our students is not a solution.

Madam Speaker, what about our tribal communities?

My district has 12 Native American tribes; 25 percent of my district is Native American. These are residents of some of our most remote and rural communities. The median household income is \$7,000 a year. These folks often struggle with access to the most basic medical care and resources. If se-

questration takes effect, their primary source of health care, the Indian Health Service, will take a major hit. Other Federal programs, such as Medicare, Medicaid and veterans benefits, are exempt from sequestration cuts. The Indian Health Service is not exempt. IHS may be cut by over \$200 million.

What does a cut like that mean to tribal communities in my district?

It would mean losing hundreds of jobs. It would mean cuts in primary health care. Nationwide, it's estimated that 3,000 fewer people would be admitted for inpatient care and that 800,000 fewer Native Americans would be able to receive outpatient visits.

Hurting our tribal communities is not a solution. The consequences of these cuts are not TV sound bites. They are real, and they hurt my district and our Nation. It will take both parties working together to find a responsible, thoughtful solution to our budget challenges. It will take both parties working together to put a stop to these reckless cuts of sequestration.

So let's work together, and let's show the American people that we are a Congress that can find solutions.

SEQUESTER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. SCHWARTZ) for 5 minutes.

Ms. SCHWARTZ. There are just 2 days that are left for Congress to work together to avert these very deep, across-the-board, automatic cuts to our domestic priorities.

The Obama administration released a State-by-State report outlining the harmful impact these cuts would have on middle class families, on jobs and on economic growth. Yet Republicans continue to reject any balanced approach to deficit reduction presented by House and Senate Democrats, which includes spending cuts, additional revenues and economic growth. Moving from crisis to crisis does not move us any closer to finding a long-term solution to deficit reduction. Instead, these crises cause uncertainty, inhibit private sector investment, undermine consumer confidence, and slow economic growth.

In Pennsylvania, thousands of jobs in both the public and private sectors are at risk of elimination due to the inaction of House Republicans—from elementary school teachers to scientific researchers. Here are just a few examples:

Sharon Easterling, who is the executive director of the Delaware Valley Association for the Education of Young Children, said that Republican inaction would hurt Pennsylvania's children as "nearly 2,300 Head Start children will lose access to preschool almost immediately";

Holly Lange, who is the president of the Philadelphia Corporation for Aging, said:

These cuts may force the Philadelphia Corporation for Aging to limit vital transpor-

tation services for our seniors, who depend on shared rides to remain independent in their homes;

Cinda Waldbuesser, the senior Pennsylvania program manager for the National Parks Conservation Center, said:

Every national park in the system would be affected, including treasured places like Gettysburg, Independence Hall and Valley Forge, and the local economies that depend on visitor spending would also suffer.

The President and House and Senate Democrats have put forth a balanced solution that would replace the across-the-board cuts with a plan that does cut spending but that raises revenues and builds economic opportunity for all of us in this Nation. Republicans have yet to offer a balanced plan or to be willing to engage in the serious discussions of a reasonable bipartisan alternative for our seniors, our children, our first responders, our teachers, our civilian workers in the Department of Defense, our law enforcement officers, our public health professionals, our qualified medical researchers—who research not only at NIH but at medical centers across our country—and business owners who are seeking loan guarantees.

I could go on and on. You've heard some of the examples, but the fact is that all Americans are counting on us to act. It is our responsibility to act, and we should.

I urge my Republican colleagues to reject their partisan, one-sided approach and to be willing to work with us to find common ground and to reach a solution to deficit reduction that takes a balanced approach; that respects our obligation to Americans, particularly our seniors and our children; that strengthens the middle class; that creates certainty for the business community and for our middle class consumers; and that creates opportunities for families and businesses across the country.

The meeting called this morning by the President is an opportunity to find that solution, and I encourage Republicans to take this moment seriously, to be willing to compromise in order to avert these cuts and to set us on a path to both deficit reduction and economic growth. It is not too late. It is increasingly almost too late, but let's get it done on behalf of the American people and our future.

PROTECTING SMALL BUSINESSES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BENTIVOLIO) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BENTIVOLIO. Last quarter, the economy actually shrunk rather than grew. That's unacceptable. Something has to change.

As I've traveled throughout my district in Michigan, business leaders tell me the same thing over and over again: It's too hard to start or to expand my small business because I can hardly understand how to comply with the latest